

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/breaking-boundaries-breast-cancer/adapting-breast-cancer-care-amid-covid-19/11595/>

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Adapting Breast Cancer Care Amid COVID-19

Announcer:

Welcome to Breaking Boundaries in Breast Cancer on ReachMD, sponsored by Lilly. On this program, we'll hear from Dr. Ben Anderson, Professor of Surgery and Global Health Medicine at the University of Washington, who shares how he and his team have adapted to changes in breast cancer treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Let's hear from him now.

Dr. Anderson:

Should there be background music playing during Anderson's speaking? If so, please add.

COVID has impacted all of us, and in my own setting in Seattle, we had to adapt to the rise in COVID patients who are being admitted to the hospital, and so initially we needed to develop strategies for managing breast cancer patients.

One of the strategies that we developed was in recognizing that using neoadjuvant systemic therapies, such as neoadjuvant endocrine therapy for ER-positive cancers, was one way in which we could help offload the operating rooms during this acute period.

In the past we really didn't think about these strategies and how we would manage the huge influx of patients and limited resources, but I think the sorts of strategies that we developed, which were very much evidence-based, are the same sort of thoughts that we can have in the setting of low and middle-income countries.

I would say that not only did we have to think about how to address those initial steps, we also had to think about how we reintroduce things, so screening stopped. We stopped doing mammographic screening realizing that finding more patients was not going to be the initial need.

But thinking about how to reintroduce screening in the setting of limited resources is something that we've been learning about in the US, that I believe we are going to be translating into other environments, so to that end, COVID has been an equalizer in making us all aware that we all live with limited resources, and it's just more obvious at some times than others.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Ben Anderson discussing some of the strategies his team developed to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. To revisit any part of this discussion and to access other episodes in this series, visit ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!